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ABSTRACT

Guidelines for self-study and evaluation criteria are presented for use by community college governing boards. For each of 10 areas, a discussion is provided, questions regarding the board's performance are posed, a summary evaluation of the board's work in the area is solicited, and space is provided for additional comments or suggestions. The 10 areas are: (1) institutional mission and educational policy; (2) institutional planning; (3) physical plant; (4) financial resources and management; (5) board organization; (6) board/chief executive relations; (7) board/faculty relations; (8) board/student relations; (9) court of appeal functions in the settlement of disputes; and (10) bridge between the college and the community. (LAL)

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self-study criteria

for governing boards of community colleges

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Criterion 1

Institutional Mission and Educational Policy

No institution can be all things to all people. Every institution must decide what its particular mission is —*its real purpose*— if it is to have sound direction. The mission must be clearly defined so students will know the institution's purposes and objectives, faculty members will know how to direct their efforts, and the public will know what they are supporting.

An official statement setting forth the specific mission of a college should be a cooperative effort of the administration, the faculty, and the governing board. Acting alone, the board lacks the professional experience to define educational goals in detail. Its role is to insure that the mission is clearly stated; and because it stands apart from day-to-day operations, administrative preoccupations, and faculty special interests, the board is in a unique position to lead, seek consensus, and stimulate action.

	Yes	No
1. Is there a written and officially adopted statement of the institution's mission or purpose?	_____	_____
2. In your opinion is this statement sufficiently clear to serve as a guide to academic planning and decision-making?	_____	_____
3. Do the institution's goals or objectives respond to the community's educational and public service needs?	_____	_____
4. Does the board periodically review its statement of purpose and educational goals, and examine the policies which implement them?	_____	_____
5. Does the board assume a role in helping to determine basic educational policies?	_____	_____

Summary: In relation to this criterion I feel that the board's performance has been:

Very Good_____ Good_____ Barely Adequate_____ Poor_____

Further comments or suggestions related to this criterion:

Criterion 2

Institutional Planning

In the difficult period stretching ahead for higher education, effective planning is essential. The number and future sources of students should be anticipated. Projections of expenses and income need to be studied. The character of the educational program, the size and composition of needed faculty, the need for student and other services should be considered.

	Yes	No
1. Does the board require, participate in, review, and approve comprehensive institutional planning regarding:		
a. enrollments?	_____	_____
b. staffing?	_____	_____
c. physical facilities?	_____	_____
d. availability of resources?	_____	_____
e. educational programs?	_____	_____
2. Were key members of the faculty and community involved in this planning?	_____	_____
3. Is there a schedule for reviewing and, if desirable, revising the plan at regular intervals?	_____	_____

Summary: In relation to this criterion I feel that the board's performance has been:

Very Good_____ Good_____ Barely Adequate_____ Poor_____

Further comments or suggestions related to this criterion:

Criterion 3

Physical Plant

It is the board's responsibility to create and maintain a physical environment that is conducive to learning and consistent with reasonable expectations of future funds and enrollment trends. Decisions that involve the campus master plan and the capital outlay budget request are the major concerns. Prudence demands that maximum use be made of the present physical plant before construction or remodeling is considered. Credibility in capital funding requests should be ensured. Efficient use of the board's time and effort requires that it be concerned only with those matters that cannot properly be delegated to the staff.

	Yes	No
1. Has the board approved a master plan for the physical campus which includes both present and anticipated needs?		
2. Do you feel that the board makes decisions on details related to buildings and grounds that really should be delegated to the administrative staff?		
3. Within the past two years, has the board received and reviewed a report on physical plant utilization – classroom, laboratory, office and other building space?		
4. Prior to its consideration of requests for remodeling or new construction has the board satisfied itself that present spaces are being used effectively and instructional areas are scheduled for optimum utilization?		

Summary: In relation to this criterion I feel that the board's performance has been:

Very Good _____ Good _____ Barely Adequate _____ Poor _____

Further comments or suggestions re'ated to this criterion:

Criterion 4

Financial Resources and Management

Budget decisions and requests for public funds to support the college are duties for which the board must assume full and final responsibility. The board must establish a reputation for credibility in its plans and funding requests. It must have a record of fiscal responsibility and sound management in its operations. It must make supportable budget requests and ask for what is needed, taking a realistic approach to finances. It must be sure it has the staff expertise to make sound projections of enrollments and income, and expert analyses of costs if it is to ensure confidence.

	Yes	No
1. Are the board's review and approval of the budget carried out with sufficient care so that a defensible budget results?	_____	_____
2. Do you feel that the board has established credibility in its operating budget and capital fund requests by reasonably equating the necessity for programs with the availability of funds to support them?	_____	_____
3. Does the board take appropriate leadership in securing adequate financial support?	_____	_____
4. Do you feel that the board fully accepts its responsibility for prudent fiscal management?	_____	_____

Summary: In relation to this criterion I feel that the board's performance has been:

Very Good_____ Good_____ Barely Adequate_____ Poor_____

Further comments or suggestions related to this criterion:

Criterion 5

Board Organization

The effectiveness of a board greatly depends on the structure of its organization and the conduct of its meetings. The board's rules, formulated over time and frequently out of habit or tradition, determine these matters. A productive board is usually one that has periodically taken the time to thoughtfully sort out its duties, critically review its organizational structure and rules of procedure and update its policy or operations documents.

The board should also review the procedures of formulating agendas and conducting meetings to see that necessary business is dispatched promptly, the implications of key policy decisions are carefully considered, and time is not wasted.

	Yes	No
1. Within the past two or three years, has the board in some formal way reviewed its procedures and policies?	_____	_____
2. With respect to the board's agenda:		
a. does it put before you issues of *policy* the board should consider?	_____	_____
b. is it accompanied by appropriate supporting information in the right amount?	_____	_____
c. does it reach you sufficiently in advance of the meeting?	_____	_____
3. Do you feel that board meetings allow enough time for responsible discussion of key issues?	_____	_____
4. Does the board do an adequate job of rotating leadership in key board offices?	_____	_____

Summary: In relation to this criterion I feel that the board's performance has been:

Very Good_____ Good_____ Barely Adequate_____ Poor_____

Further comments or suggestions related to this criterion:

Criterion 6

Board/Chief Executive Relations

Trustees and the chief executive share at least one major characteristic: they have a total institutional perspective. The quality of the "working relationship" between the board and the executive officer is of critical importance to the effectiveness of each. While the board must take responsibility for basic policies and their consequences it must also give the chief executive the authority and flexibility to act decisively.

Selection of the chief executive officer is a major responsibility of the governing board. This selection should be preceded by a clear definition of his or her qualifications and expected accomplishments.

	Yes	No
1. Is there a climate of mutual trust and support between the board and chief executive?	___	___
2. Have the board or some of its members counseled with the chief executive to provide guidelines or strengthen certain areas of performance?	___	___
3. Do you feel that the board has delegated to the chief executive the authority he or she needs to administer the institution successfully?	___	___
a. is such authority set forth in a board policy document?	___	___
b. is the executive's authority to act decisively in emergency situations clearly stipulated?	___	___
4. If you were a trustee when the incumbent chief exective was selected:		
a. were the selection procedures carefully planned and documented?	___	___
b. was there a prepared statement of specific duties, responsibilities, expectations?	___	___
c. were such constituencies as the faculty, administrators, and students consulted?	___	___
d. was there a specific list of prerequisites (retirement plan, housing allowance, auto, etc.) in the terms of appointment?	___	___

Summary: In relation to this criterion I feel that the board's performance has been:

Very Good _____ Good _____ Barely Adequate _____ Poor _____

Further comments or suggestions related to this criterion:

Criterion 7

Board/Faculty Relations

In academic affairs a measure of the board's success is the nature of its relationship with the faculty. Most lay board members lack the professional expertise to legislate in this area, yet they share the burden of responsibility for the quality of the institution and for the manner in which the institution fulfills its academic goals. Therefore, the board must trust the professionals for advice, and delegate to them authority to carry out educational policies and procedures.

The line between governing policy and operating policy is not easily drawn but it must be established with reasonable clarity. The institution needs to be given academic direction, yet the faculty must be free to perform its professional work.

	Yes	No
1. Does the board have effective means of two-way communication with the faculty?	_____	_____
2. Does the board, through the chief executive, seek the advice and recommendations of faculty leaders in formulating basic educational policies?	_____	_____

3. Do you feel that the board exercises authority over:

a. _____ more aspects of educational affairs than it needs to?

b. _____ fewer aspects of educational affairs than it should?

c. _____ neither. Its participation in educational affairs is about right.

4. Does the board delegate to the chief executive and faculty full responsibility for implementing educational policies?	_____	_____

5. Has the board adopted adequate policies concerning:

a. grievance procedures?	_____	_____
b. processes for selection, promotion, retention, tenure?	_____	_____
c. standards for faculty performance?	_____	_____

Summary: In relation to this criterion I feel that the board's performance has been:

Very Good_____ Good_____ Barely Adequate_____ Poor_____

Further comments or suggestions related to this criterion:

Criterion 8

Board/Student Relations

The board has ultimate responsibility to protect the welfare of students and to provide a healthy campus environment that is conducive to scholarship and personal development. The students' health and comfort are essential to learning. The students' freedom to learn independently is a basic tenet of academic freedom, and like other freedoms it must be exercised under the obligation to protect the welfare of the community as a whole. The board should have good lines of communication to and from students.

	Yes	No
1. Does the board have a satisfactory means for continuing two-way communication with students?	_____	_____
2. Has the board approved policies that make adequate provision for the students' health, welfare, and non-curricular (cultural, educational, recreational) activities?	_____	_____
3. Has the board set adequate policies for student appeal of perceived injustices (academic or other)?	_____	_____
4. Are students and student organizations free to examine and discuss questions or issues of interest to them and to express opinions publicly, so long as it is made clear that they speak only for themselves?	_____	_____

Summary: In relation to this criterion I feel that the board's performance has been:

Very Good_____ Good_____ Barely Adequate_____ Poor_____

Further comments or suggestions related to this criterion:

Criterion 9

Court of Appeal

Governing boards may be called upon to fulfill a quasi-judicial function in the settlement of disputes arising within the institutional community, though generally disputes should be settled at the lowest possible administrative level to avoid inappropriate board involvement in operational matters. The board should carefully develop due process policies and delegate authority.

	Yes	No
1. Has the board developed procedural due process or "fair hearing" requirements which delegate the management of conflict situations to the chief executive and to academic administrators or faculty leaders?	_____	_____
2. Are the disputes that have been brought to the board:		
a. accurately and concisely briefed for your study?	_____	_____
b. brought to the board before they have escalated to crisis proportions?	_____	_____
c. settled without unduly prolonged debate?	_____	_____
3. Do you feel that disputes have been settled with sympathetic understanding of the human and institutional issues involved?	_____	_____
4. Do you feel that the board has been called upon to adjudicate cases of conflict that should have been settled before they came to the board?	_____	_____

Summary: In relation to this criterion I feel that the board's performance has been:

Very Good_____ Good_____ Barely Adequate_____ Poor_____

Further comments or suggestions related to this criterion:

Criterion 10

Bridge Between the College and the Community

The board can be a valuable channel for interpreting the college to the community and for bringing the perspective of the community and marketplace to the campus. It is important that the board be aware of community needs, attitudes, and expectations. It is also important that the community know and understand the role of the college to provide liberal education as an adjunct to training. In its decision-making, the board should encourage support and thoughtful participation from members of off-campus community groups and take advantage of their expertise.

	Yes	No
1. Do you feel that the board keeps itself well informed about the educational and manpower training needs of its local community?	_____	_____
2. Do you feel that the board and the college keep the community well informed of the college's activities, educational perspectives, and plans?	_____	_____
3. Has the board established channels for access and exchange between the campus and community in order to deal adequately with the needs, interests, and viewpoints of each?	_____	_____
4. Does the board make effective use of citizen advisory committees?	_____	_____

Summary: In relation to this criterion I feel that the board's performance has been:

Very Good_____ Good_____ Barely Adequate_____ Poor_____

Further comments or suggestions related to this criterion:

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